

Media contacts:

Kirsten Kendrick, Governor's Communications Office, 360-902-4136;

Susan Zemek, Salmon Recovery Funding Board, 360-902-3081

Gov. Gary Locke Announces \$26.7 Million in Grants to Protect and Restore Salmon

OLYMPIA – Dec. 9, 2004 – Gov. Gary Locke today announced the award of \$26.7 million in grants to local communities across the state to protect and restore salmon habitat in Washington state.

The grants, ranging from \$26,000 to more than \$1 million, were given to organizations within 27 counties for work ranging from planting trees along streams to cool the water for salmon, to replacing crushed culverts that prevent salmon from migrating, to changing stream channels to create better places for salmon to spawn and grow.

Salmon, an icon of the Northwest, were put on the federal list of endangered species in 1991. By then, the number of salmon had fallen to only 40 percent of historic levels in Washington, Oregon, Idaho and California. By 1999, almost three-fourths of Washington was affected by Endangered Species Act listings of salmon and bull trout. Those listings set off a series of activities including the formation of the Salmon Recovery Funding Board to oversee the investment of state and federal funds for salmon recovery. Since 2000, the board has awarded \$214.7 million in grants for 591 projects.

“These grants are an important part of helping restore salmon,” Locke said. “Washington’s approach to funding these projects is a national model. We asked local groups to set the priorities within their communities and develop projects. These projects have involved thousands of citizens statewide – from school children to city mayors. It’s a tremendous grassroots effort.”

This year, there were 188 projects requesting a total of \$47.4 million, nearly double the funding available. The Salmon Recovery Funding Board approved projects for funding on Dec. 3. The grant awards are as follows:

<u>Chelan</u>	\$994,591	<u>Pend Oreille</u>	\$924,442
<u>Clallam</u>	\$1.48 million	<u>Pierce</u>	\$1.5 million
<u>Clark</u>	\$199,999	<u>San Juan</u>	\$133,829
<u>Cowlitz</u>	\$545,360	<u>Skagit</u>	\$1.59 million
<u>Garfield</u>	\$51,000	<u>Skamania</u>	\$459,644
<u>Grays Harbor</u>	\$920,607	<u>Snohomish</u>	\$1.57 million
<u>Island</u>	\$221,127	<u>Thurston</u>	\$1.37 million
<u>Jefferson</u>	\$1.56 million	<u>Wahkiakum</u>	\$269,485
<u>King</u>	\$3.66 million	<u>Walla Walla</u>	\$558,898
<u>Kitsap</u>	\$905,182	<u>Whatcom</u>	\$1.15 million
<u>Kittitas</u>	\$923,860	<u>Yakima</u>	\$323,698
<u>Klickitat</u>	\$829,256		
<u>Lewis</u>	\$380,149		
<u>Mason</u>	\$1.7 million		
<u>Okanogan</u>	\$1.22 million		
<u>Pacific</u>	\$1.3 million		

Projects were proposed by a wide range of watershed interest groups including local governments, nonprofit organizations and tribes. Local technical advisors use their scientific understanding of the watershed to evaluate projects and then local citizen groups used those recommendations to make a final list to submit to the board.

This year, local communities were asked to develop strategic plans for salmon recovery in their watersheds and to make sure the projects they submitted for funding addressed those strategies. A statewide panel of experts then reviewed their projects lists.

“Local communities have demonstrated steady progress in the quality of the projects they submit for funding,” said William Ruckelshaus, board chairman. “We asked them to go a step further this year and develop strategic plans that will be a road map for them and for us. That way we know the projects are the most effective and we are addressing the highest priority needs for their areas. Collectively, we are doing a better job of funding the best of best.”

The Salmon Recovery Funding Board awarded grants for 103 individual projects, including 53 projects for habitat improvements such as planting trees along streams for shade and removing fish passage barriers. The board provided grants for 16 projects that focus on the purchase of key salmon habitat, 26 projects for studies and plans to help identify priority activities for the future and another eight projects that combine habitat acquisition, improvements or studies.

The Salmon Recovery Funding Board was established in July 1999 by the state Legislature to help oversee the investment of state and federal funds for salmon recovery. Citizen members appointed by the governor are: Ruckelshaus; Frank L. “Larry” Cassidy, Vancouver; Brenda McMurray, Yakima; James Peters, Olympia; and Steve Tharinger, Clallam County. Five state agency directors or elected leaders also serve as members (Conservation Commission, Department of Ecology, Department of Fish and Wildlife, Commission of Public Lands and Department of Transportation).

#

Editor’s Note: For descriptions of the projects in each county, visit www.iac.wa.gov/documents/press_releases/SRFB_5th_rnd_grants_award_list.htm.